**Western Washington University**

**Services and Activities Fee Committee
Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, April 23, 2021; 2:00-3:00 pm**

**Teams Virtual Meeting**

**Present:** Kurt Willis, Debbie Curry (recorder), Eric Alexander, Ranulfo Molina, Noemi Bueno, Steve Card, Emma Duff, Adam Leonard, Caitlin Summers, Danil Sonjaya, Travis Cram, Rebecca McLean, Evan Shuster, Kevin Harris, Ichi Kwon

**Guest:** Megan McGinnis, Michael Sledge

**Agenda Items:** 1) Approval of Minutes, 2) DRAC budget presentation, 3) Further S&A Discussion, 4) Next Meeting Conversation

Evan Schuster called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

Evan asked if there were questions or amendments to the minutes of the April 16, 2021 meeting. There were no amendments requested to these minutes. Emma Duff made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Danil Sonjaya seconded the motion. The motion to approve passed unanimously.

**DRAC budget presentation / Questions:**

DRACs budget presentation was presented by Travis and Rebecca. Travis shared the Overview sheet, outlining DRACs request for the 2022 academic year was an increase of $38,360 or 3.43% increase over the 2019/20 academic year’s actuals. Rebecca added the primary reasons for the increases are because WWU Racing (a new constituent admitted the 2020 academic year) will receive funds for the first time this year, for wage increases, and a couple of computer purchases added back to the budget which had been removed last year.

DRACs request for 2022 Summer is $67, 798, an increase of -$32,932. This shows as a net decrease on the Overview due to the fact one constituent (Theatre and Dance) will incur less expenses this year as they put some projects on hold while filling a couple of positions; however, Theatre and Dance hopes to bring their summer programs back online.

Travis provided the following brief breakdown of requests per constituent:

* Forensics: Status quo budget with no real changes.
* Student Publications: (which includes Western Front, Klipsun, Jeopardy, The Planet, Occam’s Razor)
Western Front experienced the largest budget decrease due to not publishing this past year; the council overseeing these budgets adjusted expenses across the board to allow those not incurring costs to provide means for those who can take advantage of available funds to do so.
* Theatre & Dance: Have requested a $14K increase in order to provide financial support of lost revenue for ticket sales they would normally have during the year. To promote access to their work and reduce the financial burden on the student population, Theatre & Dance has decided to make all ticket sales for students, staff and faculty free.
* International Affairs Assn (IAA): Had a considerable amount of money they were unable to use this year due to travel bans and have earmarked these funds to build into their budget over the next two budget cycles as well as to decrease the overall pressure on the budget.
* Music: Has asked for no change or increase from last year’s request.
* WWU Racing: Has requested a $3K increase over last year’s request: They have introduced an electric car to their mix, are continuing to improve what they’ve been working on, as well as working to bring their projects into the world of green technology. Last year Racing requested $15K.
* Budget Support: This cost covers DRACs support for Rebecca’s budget expertise.

In terms of Summer, a few programs are requesting additional funding, but historically DRAC is down compared to where we had been, because Theatre & Dance are transitioning into a new era of summer programming.

Neither Evan or Kevin had anything more to add to what Rebecca and Travis had presented.

Eric asked for more detail explaining how the “ear marked” notes play into the budgets. Rebecca explained Forensics and IAA decided, rather than ask for an increase, they would earmark unspent revenues to program improvements (Forensics will buy software licensing/equipment for online debate programs; Student Publications will hold off on purchasing computers when they return to on-site work, both moving budgeted funding to “earmark reserves.”

Emma asked, regarding Publications, if they anticipate returning to print as in the past or if they will remain working online. Megan responded that the Western Front would continue to work primarily online, although they do hope to print a welcome back issue (one for fall and/or one per quarter), and if revenues increase through advertising they may go back to printing. Advertising has been low due to the economy and the fact we weren’t printing. Klipson printed a winter edition and hopes to print a fall edition as well, and the annual publications will continue printing once a year, as they have been. Travis added that most areas have indicated they would like to manage both methods of working which supports a larger variety of skills development and learning abilities; he believes there will continue to be a mix going forward.

Kurt asked for clarification on the Theatre & Dance increase request over their 2019 request: Rebecca responded that their biggest change will be to not charge for performances; they are asking for funds to offset ticket sales revenue they would normally receive. Evan added that they have also started to film and put online some of their plays which has increased their expenses by paying more in royalty or copy right fees for making and posting videos of performances (copy right laws and royalty costs are different for filming).

Eric asked Kurt, from a consistency perspective, how the 3.4% increase plays into our current budget situation and how that plays out moving forward. Now that it seems everyone has come in under the cap of 4%, what do we look at in the future? This decision will matter this year and for years to come. Kurt explained that the optics this year would seem a bit confusing because the budget approved by the Board last year was based on a percentage rather than a dollar amount. Eric suggested a discussion on the 4% cap issue; we all worked hard to eliminate costs last year and we were all impacted in different ways, and we need to be clear, because that 4% is the base with which we build moving forward for years to come. 4% can be challenging to work with when there are program changes or uncontrolled or unexpected increases (minimum wage for example) and he wants to be sure we aren’t cutting our selves short when picking our percentage increase change.

Steve commented that last year there was no increase to any of the fees, so we would assume with no increase to the fee, regardless of COVID, the fee would remain the same. The fee was $223.98 per quarter this year (as well as 2019 and 2020), and Steve indicated we should be using the 2019-20 Board approved allocations as our baseline to move forward.

To Erics point, Steve felt the size of the increase by his estimation the overall increases appear to be about 1.5%, equating to a bit over $3 per quarter. Manipulating numbers that aren’t good numbers for 2020 and 2021, with no increase for either year, we should use the 2019-20 numbers as our base metric to build off of.

Kurt asked for clarification on Steve’s perspective based on enrollment and if that changed his calculations. Steve agreed that enrollment could make a difference, but is an unknown; hoping that enrollment is back up in fall, he believed we need a common ground on the starting metric for us all. This is an important piece, and we need to make sure if we ask for an increase of fee, if the committee chooses to do so, we are reflective of making the proper percentage increase and are able to justify what that increase is. Using the 2019/20 numbers is a little over $112,000, by his calculations about $3 per quarter or $9 per year, significantly lower than 4%.

Eric agreed with Steve’s calculations, adding that we all chose last year to “not” do “some things”, and asked if this year we will continue to choose “not” to do “some things” and continue to short ourselves, or not. He’s not necessarily advocating for increasing the student fees and understands it’s a tricky balance and exactly why the 4% cap is in place.

Based on today’s presentation (information), Kurt shared a working spreadsheet, 2021-22 AY Request Summary (version 4/23/21) and asked advisors to confirm the 2022 budget requests noted on the spreadsheet to be accurate; all confirmed those totals were correct. Kurt stated, based on numbers at this point, there is approximately a $76K delta, plus or minus, with Housing and Music Copyrights to determine. Kurt thanked the advisors.

**Larger S&A Discussion**

Evan briefly outlined the process the committee will follow from this point and suggested the committee plan on having the recommendation ready to go by May 24. Understanding that enrollment will play a large part in the final decision-making process, and that enrollment data will not be available until at least May 1.

**Recommendation on fee and distributions due May 24th**:

Kurt confirmed for Evan that the committee’s recommendation is due to Dr. Huskey on May 24. If the initial recommendation is rejected, we would need to rework the recommendation and return to her within a short period of time (Trustees meet on June 11). The big factor that can change the numbers would be our enrollment numbers which we hopefully will get May 1.

**Enrollment numbers – May 1st**

Michael confirmed this is the soonest we can receive the best number from Enrollment Services – May 1st or just after.

Evan asked what the percentage differences were in enrollment from 2019 to 2020. Kurt shared a spreadsheet titled *Enrollment Analysis FY15 to present* to try to address Evan’s question.

Because of the time it will take for the committee to have access to accurate enrollment data, Evan asked the committee if it made sense to work through three different enrollment increase scenarios to be prepared for a quick decision once more accurate numbers are known. It was agreed this was a good topic for the committee to consider next week.

**Comparing the budgets/Conversation for next meeting:**

Kurt offered to share information the committee may find helpful once a final dollar has been determined – what does a 1% or .05% increase generate in “new money.” Assuming we need roughly $50K in new money for these requests, you will be able to compare differences based on the different enrollment numbers we plug in. Kurt indicated this tool is helpful to tell the story in a number of ways (dollars vs percentages) to help make the decision clear from different perspectives.

Evan felt this would be a great start for next week’s conversation and would allow time to play with the numbers, as well as discuss what the fee level should be. Kurt agreed.

Kurt shared a quick look at the Enrollment Analysis FY15 to Present spreadsheet which will be used next week.

Travis suggested, rather than working on enrollment increase scenarios, it might be better to look at decrease scenarios that match this year and then maybe ½ that and also a scenario with no change (tiers described below), adding that news reports he has been hearing are not encouraging that students are heading to college anytime soon (25% of high school seniors are opting to delay college).

Compare three tiers:

1. Bad case – the same amount of reduction in enrollment percentage as we saw this year
2. Mixed case – use an enrollment decrease that is half as large as the bad case
3. Good case – use an enrollment decrease of 0%

Today’s meeting adjourned at 2:55 pm.

Next meeting: Friday, April 30, 2:00-3:00 pm, Teams Virtual